

Claims

- [c1] 1. A license plate bracket for an automotive vehicle, comprising:
a generally planar body having a front side adapted to receive a license plate, and a rear side;
a plurality of self-locking, axially engageable retention structures extending from the rear side of said generally planar body, with said retention structures comprising at least one primary retention structure adapted to axially engage a vehicular surface to which said bracket is being mounted, so as to establish an axis of limited rotation of said bracket which is parallel to a major axis of said generally planar body, and with said plurality of retention structures further comprising at least one secondary retention structure which is adapted to axially engage and lock itself with said vehicular surface when said generally planar body is rotated into contact with said vehicular surface.
- [c2] 2. A license plate bracket according to Claim 1, wherein said primary retention structure comprises a planar hook having a major axis which is parallel to a major axis of said generally planar body.

- [c3] 3. A license plate bracket according to Claim 1, wherein said at least one secondary retention structure comprises a spring loaded toggle.
- [c4] 4. A license plate bracket according to Claim 1, wherein said at least one secondary retention structure comprises a resilient sprag.
- [c5] 5. A license plate bracket according to Claim 1, wherein said at least one secondary retention structure comprises a resilient ribbed stud.
- [c6] 6. A license plate bracket according to Claim 1, wherein said license plate bracket has a plurality of secondary retention structures.
- [c7] 7. A license plate bracket according to Claim 1, wherein said primary retention structure comprises a planar hook mounted to the rear side of said generally planar body at a location proximate the midpoint of said planar body, with said bracket having a plurality of secondary retention structures located proximate an edge of said generally planar body.
- [c8] 8. An end module for an automotive vehicle, comprising:
 - a first exterior body panel;
 - a second exterior body panel abuttingly engaged with

said first exterior body panel; and
a license plate bracket mounted to said end module, with
said bracket comprising:
a generally planar body having a front side adapted to
receive a license plate, and a rear side; and
a plurality of self-locking retention structures extending
from the rear side of said generally planar body, with
said retention structures comprising at least a primary
retention structure adapted to extend through a passage
formed in said first exterior body panel, with said pri-
mary retention structure locking itself upon a wall of said
passage, and with said self-locking retention structures
further comprising a secondary retention structure
adapted to extend through a port defined by the abut-
ment of said first exterior body panel and said second
exterior body panel, with said secondary retention struc-
ture locking itself upon at least one of said first and sec-
ond exterior body panels.

[c9] 9. An end module for an automotive vehicle according to
Claim 8, wherein said first exterior body panel comprises
a valance panel, and said second exterior body panel
comprises a bumper.

[c10] 10. An end module according to Claim 8, wherein said
license plate bracket has a single primary retention
structure and a plurality of secondary retention struc-

tures, with each of said secondary retention structures comprising a generally flat strap extending through a generally flat port defined between said first and second exterior body panels, and with said secondary retention structures each terminating with an integral retainer toggle.

[c11] 11. An end module according to Claim 10, wherein each of said retainer toggles comprises a sprag formed integrally with a generally flat strap.

[c12] 12. An end module according to Claim 8, wherein said license plate bracket has a plurality of primary retention structures and a plurality of secondary retention structures, with each of said primary retention structures comprising a generally flat strap having a hook end for engaging one of said exterior body panels, and with each of said secondary retention structures comprising a generally flat strap extending through a generally flat port defined between said exterior body panels, and with said secondary retention structures each terminating with an integral retainer toggle.

[c13] 13. An end module according to Claim 8, wherein said passage comprises an air passage.

[c14] 14. A method for manually attaching a license plate

frame, having a plurality of retention structures extending from a generally planar body, to an end module of an automotive vehicle, without the use of tools, with said method of attachment comprising the steps of:

inserting a primary retention structure into a passage formed in said end module and thereby locking said primary retention structure to a wall of said passage; and inserting a plurality of secondary retention structures into passages formed at the intersection of adjacent panels comprising said end module, thereby locking said secondary retention structures to at least one of said adjacent panels.

[c15] 15. A method according to Claim 14, wherein said end module comprises a front end module and said adjacent panels comprise a bumper and a valance panel mounted under the bumper.

[c16] 16. A method according to Claim 14, wherein said end module comprises a rear end module and said adjacent panels comprise a bumper and a valance panel mounted under the bumper.

[c17] 17. A method according to Claim 14, wherein said end module comprises a front end module and said adjacent panels comprise a grille opening panel and a bumper fascia.

[c18] 18. A method according to Claim 14, wherein said end module comprises a front end module and said passage comprises an air passage.